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EXILES IN ENGLAND BRING *JOURNEYS OUT OF THE BODY* TO ROMANIA

by Irene Cupe

Irene Cupe taught English as a second language in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. In 1990 she took an early retirement and with her husband, Radu Ilea, a physician, immigrated to England. Both of them wished to radically change their lives after the devastating loss of their son in 1989. Jointly or individually, they have published five books. Years of Exile in England, the last of these, was launched in Romania in October 2007. Irene and Radu, who is now a retired Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, live in East Sussex, England. The couple are members of the Scientific Medical Network.

On the morning of September 26, 1989, Radu-Tudor, our twenty-one-year-old only son, was hit by a car on his way to the university and died. We suspected Communist secret police involvement. My husband and I are not the only parents who have lost their child, but everyone reacts differently. Losing a child is a pain so profound that one's soul is in total shock, not far from detaching itself from the physical body. Gabriel Liiceanu, a well-known contemporary Romanian writer, says: "Because our soul is nonmaterial, people, most of them… do not believe that… one could get an influenza, a stone or even a cirrhosis of one's soul." (Ua Interzis [*The Forbidden Door*] [Bucharest: Humanitas, 2002], p. 8.

Our souls were so sick that we were not sure if we could survive. Maybe the Almighty gave us the power to leave and get as far as possible from a country that sacrificed not only its old people, but also its youth—its most precious asset. It was not that we had stones or cirrhoses of our souls, it was like a cancer of our souls. In those starved and sleepless days and nights our souls wanted to fly out, so severe was that pain, which also permeated our physical bodies. But only a higher power can decide what to do for a soul that wants to leave its body. The spirit alone stays unaltered and against all the laws of nature makes survival possible.

We left Romania in the summer of 1990, after the so-called "revolution," and came to the United Kingdom. At over fifty years of age, we were starting a new life in England from scratch. The potential for new discoveries and fulfillment in our middle years transformed our thoughts.

I lost faith. Unlike my husband, Radu, I could not find solace in church. Those who pray in churches, mosques, synagogues, or temples—and we frequented all of them—have an indirect relationship with their divinity via an intermediary. We each thought: "Why should I not somehow get in direct touch with that divinity? If there was one, there must be more than one way of knowing the immaterial world."

On the night of our son's burial, my husband had a clear message from him that we were still together; he was somewhere up above us. I ignored it. Several times we got strange signs, which we now think might have been from our son and which strengthened our belief that "we are more than our physical bodies." Little by little, after a couple of years, I came to suspect that the Power that runs the universal life could also run our personal lives.

So our story goes in a "crescendo." My husband had to work. I had time to search, to read, to study, having synchronicities like the "library angel," when books fell off the shelves without being touched. All of them spoke of the concept that "there is no death because we are more than physical matter." Yes, but I still needed proof, scientifically explained proof. But the more I read scientific reports, the more I realized that scientists were resistant to any mention of survival after death or any so-called "para" events. I was now at a loss again.

In the end, though with great difficulty, I came to acknowledge some of the Theosophical ideas. Then I took up Silva Mind Control and graduated all three courses. I did Reiki, and Grof's Holotropic Breathwork. I started meditating, but it was not easy. The worst barriers were inability to concentrate, emotional upset, despair, depression, and bitterness. I was also impatient to see some results.

Radu and I attended all kinds of conferences, among them "The Field" taught by Lynne McTaggart. I met famous people like Raymond Moody, Stanley Krippner, Edgar Mitchell, Karl Pribram, William Tiller, Hal Puthoff, and Cleve Backster, to mention but a few.

Their research and books helped quite a lot, but there was still a sense of dissatisfaction. I yearned for some inner reality or an incremental shift within myself. Having read Dr. Moody's books, I thought the out-of-body experience (OBE) was related only to the near-death experience (NDE). Until I came across Robert Monroe's books in 1992, I was not aware that it can happen spontaneously. I could not believe that Monroe went to other "locales," but chance helped my husband and me to open our minds.

In one of our trips through France, we stopped near Poitiers and visited the Futuroscope, a scientific amusement park. At the Omnimax, in a gigantic dome, we were given special spectacles that made us "enter into a different world, in another dimension where everything was possible." We ducked when bullets, insects, and humanoid beings flew around us. When we took off our spectacles, things were normal; upon putting them back, we were again in this fantastic world. Why not? What if there is such a thing? Why could we not believe that the reality we see every day is only 10 percent of the whole, as William Tiller says?

Might it be that we limit ourselves to what can be seen in this material world and do not believe in other dimensions right here around us because those worlds cannot be perceived by the majority? Even Robert Monroe said that the OBE phenomenon had been described throughout history. In fact, this was the ultimate goal of many initiation schools of antiquity. But the surest

way to become convinced of the existence of such things is your own experience, as Robert Monroe also said. There are hypotheses that OBEs are so frequent—especially during our sleep—that hovering or flying dreams could be OBEs.

Once, in England, my husband had a dream where he "met" our son, who appeared as a Japanese or Chinese monk. In his dream my husband arrived somewhere in a sunny garden. He could hear birds singing, and my son appeared and told him without words that everything was OK: "Tell Mum not to suffer because I had to leave as it was the best moment to do so. Remember? There were other moments or situations when there were close calls, like the time when I had that hemorrhagic measles, or the severe reaction to smallpox vaccination, or those maddened horses who almost crushed me, to remind you only of some." Was it a dream, a twilight state between sleep and wakefulness? This dream seemed so vivid, so real, that my husband now believes he met our son in an out-of-body experience. At that time I still thought it was the result of wishful thinking.

After having read and reread all of Bob's books, in 2003 we made up our minds to make the first step and take the *GATEWAY VOYAGE*® course at TMI, linking the trip to a visit with friends who had invited us to the USA years earlier. Although Radu and I knew that we should not have high expectations for attaining OBEs, our intention was not necessarily that, but to use guidance and Hemi-Sync® to tap into the limitless possibilities of our minds, to change, and to heal. Applying the methods we were going to learn, by using imagery we could at least stop the evolution of depression, in my case, and repair and strengthen the heart, in my husband's case, by using imagery of his own stem cells.

When we arrived at TMI the weather was sunny and unusually calm for days. When we embraced the huge crystal it transmitted a benign feeling and a funny tingling. The meetings with our trainers, Franceen King and Joe Gallenberger, who both have hypnotic voices, were interesting and pleasurable when we gathered for each debriefing session. We enjoyed meeting Joe McMoneagle, Skip Atwater, and Shirley Bliley, who kindly provided studies and articles from the TMI archives.

I had a premonition regarding my mother-in-law during the *VOYAGE*. Later we found out that while we were at TMI she had died. Toward the end of our stay, Hurricane Isabel was ravaging the East Coast, but after the whole group meditated to enter the hurricane's consciousness, she arrived in the region with her power diminished and there was only minor damage. It wasn't that Isabel lost power on her way because after leaving the region she continued to rage.

The results of the course were multiple: On returning home from TMI, we started doing the meditations we had learned. Independently my husband, Radu, added his own imagery and worked out a specific combination exercise that he did and still does relentlessly three times a

day and sometimes for five or ten minutes in between. He stabilized his heart rate to 60 beats per minute and his blood pressure to 120/70 mmHg, and he lowered his cholesterol to 5 mmol/l. As for myself, I came somehow to understand that from every hideous or unpleasant experience we undergo, we must draw something of value. Did our son die to teach us something? I have come to understand that the whole purpose of incarnation into the physical realm is to experience, and through that experience to learn—learning being an essential vehicle for the individual personality to spiritually evolve.

At TMI we met the talented and wonderful Andrea Berger, who like us was originally from Romania and with whom we have remained friends ever since. She has taken all of the TMI courses and later had an important role in the process of translating Robert Monroe's first book, *Journeys Out of the Body*, into Romanian.

In autumn 2004, when visiting family and friends in Romania, I gave Robert Monroe's books to some of my friends, and I also gave talks at the Municipal Cultural Hall in Cluj. I discussed why Hemi-Sync is so important for healing, how to learn conscious control of different states of consciousness, and how to use Hemi-Sync in the classroom to develop creativity. As a member of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, I talked about recent studies on consciousness, especially those done by Dean Radin and published in his book *The Conscious Universe*.

I tried in vain in 2006 to raise interest for the *GATEWAY EXPERIENCE*®, a gift from Andrea, but we had to return to England. I only sowed the seed. All of our personal adventures led to Robert Monroe's *Journeys Out of the Body* being translated into Romanian.

Among those who responded to Robert Monroe's books was our friend and professor emeritus of physics at the University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Petru Visarion Stetiu (who himself had an interesting experience). I introduced Andrea to Petru via e-mail, and a long exchange of opinions followed. Petru suggested to Andrea that a small lending library of Monroe's books could help to convey the Hemi-Sync idea and attract attention. Andrea generously sent Monroe's three-volume set plus three copies of *Journeys Out of the Body* in French, together with the *GOING HOME* series and many other Hemi-Sync CDs.

Because Petru lived in Romania, it was easier for him to spread Monroe ideas. He thought of organizing a course, but people were not yet ready. It seemed that the best thing to do was to translate *Journeys Out of the Body*. Petru started the translation and he and Andrea asked me to get involved. I agreed to do only ten chapters as I was busy with our own book.

Although no publisher had been found for the book, the translation continued in the hope that one would appear. This proved to be difficult. Petru took upon himself the search for a publisher. He had to find out who was responsible for the American copyright. Andrea helped again. In December 2005 she contacted Laurie Monroe. Laurie directed Andrea to her agent, Barbara Bowen, from Eleanor Friede Books, Incorporated, who then put Andrea in contact with

Tineka Gilbert from Broadway Doubleday, the United States *Journeys Out of the Body* publisher. She was responsible for the copyright approval.

One publisher from Cluj-Napoca tried to contact Doubleday. When talks with Doubleday stalled, Andrea asked Barbara for help again, and she was able to influence them. We then found another publisher, but Doubleday asked a high price for the copyright and insisted that at least a thousand copies be printed. The publisher wanted to test the market first with a smaller batch of books. Doubleday did not agree. Petru continued to search and found a publisher in Bucharest who accepted the challenge. The publisher is called, FOR YOU, and its director is Monica Visan, who is well known for publishing books on spiritual matters.

Petru had already done two revisions of the translation, but FOR YOU asked for another. Petru complied and also rewrote my part of the translation with diacritical signs specific for the Romanian language. Then a fourth and final revision was done by the publisher. My husband, Radu, wrote an afterword to explain to the reader that the OBE, as well as other phenomena, are now studied all over the world. The book was finally released on February 12, 2008. We thank from our heart the many kind people who contributed to this project.

We have now traveled the width and breadth of the British Isles and know it better than many English people do. On visiting the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland, we were very impressed. We have been inspired to find sponsors from everywhere to initiate an ecologic village in Romania, similar to that in Scotland, and who knows, perhaps another European center for TMI courses. We have already found the place—a small, hilly village twenty kilometers from Cluj-Napoca, fifteen kilometers from the saline baths of Turda-Potaissa, and eighteen kilometers from the ski center of Bioara.

[Note: Professor Stetiu has now held two successful informal workshops to introduce Hemi-Sync to Romanians.]

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